

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



139 757

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

100 + 28
128

821.08 M92 1930 (3)

Kansas City Public Library



This Volume is for

REFERENCE USE ONLY





The
BEST POEMS
of 1930

Selected by
THOMAS MOULT
& decorated by
ELIZABETH MONTGOMERY



NEW YORK
Harcourt Brace & Co.
1930

FIRST PUBLISHED 1930

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY THE GARDEN CITY PRESS LIMITED
LETCHWORTH HERTS & LONDON

To
THE MEMORY
of
ROBERT BRIDGES
EDWARD CARPENTER
DAVID HERBERT LAWRENCE
JOHN FREEMAN
Poets



Contents

(An asterisk denotes America)

Introduction		XIII
John A. Holmes	A PROLOGUE FOR POEMS	
	<i>Poetry, Chicago,* July</i>	I
Roy Campbell	HORSES ON THE CAMARGUE	
	<i>New Statesman, London, July</i>	2
Mark Van Doren	THE STORY TELLER	
	<i>New Republic, New York,* July</i>	4
W. Force Stead	INNAMORATA	
	<i>London Mercury, London, July</i>	5
Keith Sterling	STUDIO	
	<i>Century Magazine, New York,* July</i>	6
William Soutar	THE THOUGHTS OF GOD	
	<i>New Adelphi, London, Summer</i>	7
Helen Choate	RESURRECTION	
	<i>Vanity Fair, New York,* July</i>	9
Alfred Noyes	WIZARDS	
	<i>Harper's Bazaar, New York,* July</i>	10
Anderson M. Scruggs	SHADOW FRIEND	
	<i>Holland's Magazine, Dallas, Texas,* July</i>	12
Ida Graves	ENCOUNTER	
	<i>Saturday Review, London, July</i>	13
Evelyn Scott	VOYAGE	
	<i>The Nation, New York,* August</i>	14
Herbert E. Palmer	LUTE SONG OF THE LADY	
	HÉLOÏSE	
	<i>New Statesman, London, August</i>	16
Witter Bynner	ENDION	
	<i>Poetry, Chicago,* August</i>	17

Nancy Byrd Turner	AN ALLEY CAT	
<i>The New Yorker, New York,* August</i>		18
Oliver Jenkins	NEW ENGLAND COAST	
<i>The World, New York,* August</i>		19
Babette Deutsch	SOIRÉE	
<i>Poetry,* August</i>		21
James Rorty	A FREE WOMAN	
<i>The Nation,* August</i>		22
Alan Porter	LOVE'S FRAGILITY	
<i>Spectator, London, September</i>		24
Archibald Macleish	IMMORTAL AUTUMN	
<i>Yale Review, Connecticut,* Autumn</i>		26
Leonora Speyer	EARLY	
<i>Scribner's Magazine, New York,* September</i>		27
Harold Lewis Cook	THE GHOST	
<i>Poetry,* September</i>		28
Viola Gerard Garvin	SEPTEMBER	
<i>Spectator, October</i>		31
G. K. Chesterton	SONNETS IN SUMMER HEAT	
<i>London Mercury, October</i>		32
David Morton	WOOD MOMENT	
<i>The Nation,* October</i>		34
Monk Gibbon	BEING BUT MEN	
<i>Spectator, October</i>		35
Daniel Whitehead Hicky	INSCRIPTION FOR A SUNDIAL	
<i>Harper's Magazine, New York,* October</i>		36
Wilfrid Gibson	THE BLIND STRANGER	
<i>Nation and Athenæum, London, October</i>		37
Herbert E. Palmer	SONNET: AFTERMATH OF STORM AND WAR	
<i>Country Life, London, October</i>		38
W. H. Davies	OLD AUTUMN	
<i>Spectator, November</i>		39

G. M. Hort	REQUIEM FOR A COURTESAN	
	<i>Nation and Athenæum, November</i>	40
Richard Church	MUSEUM PIECE	
	<i>Spectator, November</i>	41
R. P. Tristram Coffin	THE STARFISH	
	<i>New Adelphi, Winter</i>	43
Robert Nathan	TO A FRIEND	
	<i>Scribner's Magazine*, December</i>	44
Walter de la Mare	ECHOES	
	<i>Bermondsey Book, London, Winter</i>	45
Humbert Wolfe	THE POET'S WINTER	
	<i>Saturday Review, December</i>	46
Humbert Wolfe	THE LEAFY DEAD	
	<i>Bermondsey Book, London, Winter</i>	47
Thomas Caldecot Chubb	TWO IN SIGHT OF FLORENCE	
	<i>Voices, New York, * December</i>	48
D. P. McGuire	HER DAY IS OVER	
	<i>Nation and Athenæum, December</i>	50
Freda C. Bond	SNOW SCENE	
	<i>Country Life, December</i>	51
Elizabeth Bibesco	SONNET	
	<i>Nation and Athenæum, December</i>	52
Cathal O'Byrne	NAZARETH	
	<i>Saturday Review, December</i>	53
Robert Liddell Lowe	ON A SINGING GIRL	
	<i>Virginia Quarterly Review, Virginia, * January</i>	54
Sir William Watson	THE LIGHTHOUSE OF LOVE	
	<i>Argosy, London, January</i>	55
Ernest Hartsock	STRANGE SPLENDOUR	
	<i>Poetry, * January</i>	56
A. E. Coppard	FORESTER'S SONG	
	<i>New Republic, * January</i>	58
Conrad Aiken	THE VERGE	
	<i>Scribner's Magazine, * January</i>	57

Eden Phillpotts	TO WHOM THEY SING	
	<i>Country Life, January</i>	61
V. Sackville West	KING'S DAUGHTER	
	<i>Bookman, New York,* January</i>	62
Katharine Tynan	REQUIEM	
	<i>Irish Statesman, Dublin, January</i>	66
Horace Gregory	O MORS ÆTERNA	
	<i>Poetry,* February</i>	67
Phyllis Megróz	THIS IS NOT I . . .	
	<i>Country Life, February</i>	68
Joan Barton	ONE SHARP DELIGHT	
	<i>New Statesman, February</i>	69
Wilfred Childe	HARDWICK ARRAS	
	<i>Country Life, February</i>	70
Hamish Maclaren	FOOLS' SONGS IN A WINDMILL	
	<i>The Observer, London, February</i>	71
Thomas Thornely	A GARDEN ROSE	
	<i>London Mercury, February</i>	72
A. E.	LOGOS	
	<i>Irish Statesman, February</i>	73
F. L. Lucas	TO THE GRACES	
	<i>Life and Letters, London, February</i>	74
T. Sturge Moore	NOSTALGIA	
	<i>English Review, London, February</i>	76
Virginia Moore	FORERUNNER TO RAIN	
	<i>Harper's Magazine, New York,* March</i>	77
Merle Colby	ORDER OF SERVICE	
	<i>Atlantic Monthly, Boston,* March</i>	78
Samuel Hoffenstein	OBSERVATION	
	<i>Harper's Magazine,* March</i>	79
R. C. Trevelyan	THE WOOD	
	<i>Nation and Athenæum, March</i>	80
Anderson M. Scruggs	GLORY TO THEM	
	<i>The Golden Book Magazine, New York,* March</i>	81

A. E. Coppard	A LOVER	
<i>New Republic,* March</i>	82	
Edwin Seaver	NOT YET A WORD	
<i>The Nation,* March</i>	83	
Patrick Kavanagh	PLOUGHMAN	
<i>Irish Statesman, April</i>	84	
Lizette Woodworth Reese	WITH A FLOWER	
<i>The Carillon, Washington (Columbia),* April</i>	85	
Stella Gibbons	THE TWO WISHES	
<i>London Mercury, April</i>	86	
Richard Aldington	INSCRIPTIONS	
<i>Yale Review,* Spring</i>	87	
Mary Brent Whiteside	POPLARS	
<i>Harper's Magazine,* April</i>	89	
John Hall Wheelock	PRAYER TO THE SUN	
<i>Scribner's Magazine,* May</i>	90	
Arthur L. Salmon	IN LATER DAYS	
<i>The Observer, May</i>	91	
Charles Norman	DEATH'S DOLLS ARE WE	
<i>The Forum, New York,* May</i>	92	
D. H. Lawrence	THE TRIUMPH OF THE MACHINE	
<i>London Mercury, June</i>	93	
Louis Golding	TOO MUCH BEAUTY, WORLD	
<i>Time and Tide, London, June</i>	95	
Margaret Emerson Bailey	CLOSE TO THE EARTH	
<i>Harper's Magazine,* June</i>	96	
Mary Stella Edwards	VANISHED	
<i>Week End Review, London, June</i>	97	
Gerald Gould	OBLIGATO	
<i>The Observer, June</i>	98	
Bernice Kenyon	QUIET	
<i>Scribner's Magazine,* June</i>	99	
Edmund Blunden	THE SURVIVAL	
<i>London Mercury, June</i>	100	

INTRODUCTION

YEAR by year since this series of volumes began with *The Best Poems of 1922*, a dedication has been inscribed to the memory of poets who have passed away since the previous volume was compiled. The present issue acknowledges uncommonly heavy losses in the death of the Poet Laureate (Robert Bridges), Edward Carpenter, D. H. Lawrence, and John Freeman. Lawrence has figured in several volumes, and Freeman has been represented on seven occasions out of a possible nine.

Friends of poetry may find some degree of consolation for all such losses in the fact that the poets to whom a last tribute is paid in this series have left a scene of creative energy on the part of their fellows which shows no sign of exhaustion. For this, the compiler of *The Best Poems of 1930* feels, the volumes are ample warranty. In a prefatory note to one of the preceding issues an endeavour was made to justify the series, which represent what in the compiler's estimate were the best poems published in British, Irish, and American periodicals as distinct from books during a stated twelve months—in the present volume the year extends from July 1929 to June 1930—and the passage may usefully be quoted here:

'If we were living in an ideal condition for the arts the whole motive of the book might have been to direct readers to what, in the year's work, is deemed worthy of attention, by the simple process of recording that on such a date, to this or that magazine or journal, Mr. So-and-

so contributed verses entitled *Such-and-such*, and other poems would be singled out and emphasised in like fashion. Readers would then require no further inducement to seek for themselves among the files of periodicals. But our condition is still far from the ideal, and few have the leisure for such a pursuit, apart altogether from the question of opportunity and inclination. Therefore, if only for poetry's sake, the poems must have the additional emphasis of reproduction.'

It happens that a small number of the poems have appeared in volumes restricted to their author's own work since they were published in periodicals. The following publishers, as well as the various poets and editors, are therefore offered thanks for their share in the sanctioning of reprints: Constable and Co. ('Echoes,' by Walter de la Mare); R. Cobden-Sanderson ('Innamorata' by W. Force Stead); Ernest Benn, Ltd. ('To Whom They Sing,' by Eden Phillpotts); Cambridge University Press ('A Garden Rose,' by Thomas Thorneley); Faber and Faber ('Horses on the Camargue,' by Roy Campbell); Longmans Green and Co. ('Two Wishes,' by Stella Gibbons); Bozart Press ('Strange Splendour,' by Ernest Hartsock); Covici, Friede, Inc. ('O Mors *Æterna*,' by Horace Gregory); Edwin Valentine Mitchell, Inc. ('An Alley Cat,' by Nancy Byrd Turner); Horace Livewright ('Observations,' by Samuel Hoffenstein); Houghton Mifflin and Company ('Immortal Autumn,' by Archibald Macleish); Cape and Harrison Smith ('Soirée,' by Babette Deutsch).

THOMAS MOULT

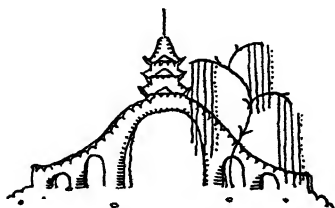
JOHN A. HOLMES

A PROLOGUE FOR POEMS

AS music builds a bright impermanent tower
High in the sunlight, wild with birds
And banners, so this chosen hour
Will take you,
So these chiming words
Will wake you
Briefly from the world.

Until the windy flags are furled,
The last page turned, the music ended,
Wander, well-attended,
Through the gate and climb the stairs.

At the top look down, look down, and see
My broad enchanted land,
Where south is love, and death lies north,
And oceans on either hand.



ROY CAMPBELL

HORSES ON THE CAMARGUE

IN the grey wastes of dread,
The haunt of shattered gulls where nothing moves
But in a shroud of silence like the dead,
I heard a sudden harmony of hooves,
And, turning, saw afar
A hundred snowy horses unconfined,
The silver runaways of Neptune's car
Racing, spray-curled, like waves before the wind.
Sons of the Mistral, fleet
As him with whose strong gusts they love to flee,
Who shod the flying thunders on their feet
And plumed them with the snortings of the sea;
Theirs is no earthly breed
Who only haunt the verges of the earth
And only on the sea's salt herbage feed—
Surely the great white breakers gave them birth.
For when for years a slave,
A horse of the Camargue, in alien lands,
Should catch some far-off fragrance of the wave
Carried far inland from his native sands,
Many have told the tale
Of how in fury, foaming at the rein,
He hurls his rider; and with lifted tail,
With coal-red eyes and cataracting mane,
Heading his course for home,
Though sixty foreign leagues before him sweep,
Will never rest until he breathes the foam
And hears the nature thunder of the deep.
But when the great gusts rise
And lash their anger on these arid coasts,
When the scared gulls career with mournful cries

And whirl across the wastes like driven ghosts:
When hail and fire converge,
The only souls to which they strike no pain
Are the white-crested fillies of the surge
And the white horses of the windy plain.
Then in their strength and pride
The stallions of the wilderness rejoice;
They feel their Master's trident in their side,
And high and shrill they answer to his voice.
With white tails smoking free,
Long streaming manes and arching necks, they show
Their kinship to their sisters of the sea—
And forward hurl their thunderbolts of snow.
Still out of hardship bred,
Spirits of power and beauty and delight
Have ever on such frugal pastures fed
And loved to course with tempests through the
night.



MARK VAN DOREN

THE STORY TELLER

HE talked, and as he talked
Wallpaper came alive;
Suddenly ghosts walked,
And four doors were five;

Calendars ran backward,
And maps had mouths;
Ships went tackward
In a great drowse;

Trains climbed trees,
And soon dripped down
Like honey of bees
On the cold brick town.

He had wakened a worm
In the world's brain,
And nothing stood firm
Until day again.

W. FORCE STEAD

INNAMORATA

HAPPY in love was the bold Venetian sailor,
Who, though he wooed in vain, could still
prevail;

For when the maid denied him, with love to guide
him,

He painted her glowing face upon the sail.

‘Be thou my love,’ he cried, ‘I have no other!’

Voyaging on to many a far-off place

Where ships were hung with flags and royal
emblems,

He came under one sign, a maiden’s face.

‘Who is this?’ cried the Greeks and the Neapolitans,

‘A saint of our Lady!’ they cried, and the men of
Spain

Doffed their caps; but the yellow beards of Flanders

Growled, — ‘Only a fool.’ — And he sailed away
again.

Scudding blithely over the glittering water,

‘Worthy art thou,’ he sang, ‘to face the sun.’

Pale by night thro’ the stars her face went rushing,

‘Worthy of heaven,’ he sang, ‘belovèd one.’

Cloud-burst and waterspout could not confound
him;

She rode on high — he dared the on-driving wave.

Love, I would be as the bold Venetian sailor,

Ever one face keeping me true and brave.

KEITH STERLING

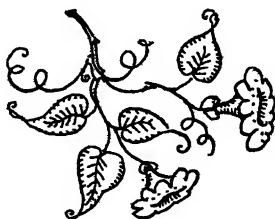
STUDIO

LITTLE Madonna hanging on the wall,
Blue-robed and reverent, with gothic hands
Clasped in ecstatic tenderness, the tall
Pale candles burn before you in their stands.

Opposite: Buddha, where you squat serene,
Hands—thumb to thumb—laid flat, you show
no sign
Of restlessness beneath your ivory sheen
Of contemplation in the lacquered shrine.

Outside, your various worshippers revile
Each other frenziedly; with ugly mien
Jealous and scowling to and fro they run.

Within this quiet room you sit and smile
Like friends who fear no silences between
Themselves, while each sits dreaming in the
sun.



WILLIAM SOUTAR

THE THOUGHTS OF GOD

WHAT power was in God's pristine thought
That took for body endless space:
What power behind that pregnant face
Hidden in light, since light was brought
From out its sightless resting-place.

Across the eyes of mortal kind
Never a thought of God is blown,
Never a thought that can be known,
But bears a body; and the blind
Stand in a shadow twice their own.

Out of the way, penumbrous glass!
Shade of His light but not of Him.
Had we the eyes of seraphim
No image of His thoughts could pass
But we should know it, limb for limb.

What was the thought which cloth'd its fire
Within the tiger's sinewy frame;
And what the thought whose lucent flame
Took wing and was the lammergeir:
What mind could suckle it, and name?

Day unto day, in restless flow,
God's bodied thoughts salute the light;
There were but nothingness for sight
If thus they did not come, and go:
A nothingness which is, as night.

For night is but the body's shade:
Nay! as a shadow's shade it is.

O! Thoughts of God (and all are His)
What standeth when these shadows fade:
What answers to His lightening kiss?

There is but schism and surmise
Of aught that hath no shade thereon:
Time casts a shadow, and is one—
A shadow of that thought which flies
Burning the body of the Sun.



HELEN CHOATE

RESURRECTION

WHEN Gabriel's final clarion
Pronounces resurrection,
And dead men roll aside their stones
And grope their way into the air
The new flesh awkward on old bones—
For all the fine angelic strains
I think there will be pains to bear:
The bright blood tunnelling numb veins,
The brain assaulted by a flood
Of beauty to be understood,
The heart—a thousand years at rest—
Battering the brittle breast.

I see them looking back a scant
Puzzled moment, hesitant,
Under the never-setting sun
Remembering oblivion,
Wishing—happy risen men—
The quick might be the dead again.

As I, beloved, yesterday
Wished you had not passed my way.

ALFRED NOYES

WIZARDS

I

THERE'S many a proud wizard in Araby and
Egypt
Can read the silver writing of the stars as they run;
And many a dark gypsy, with a pheasant in his
knapsack,
Has gathered more by moonshine than wiser
men have won;
But *I* know a Wizardry
Can take a buried acorn
And whisper forests out of it, to tower against the
sun.

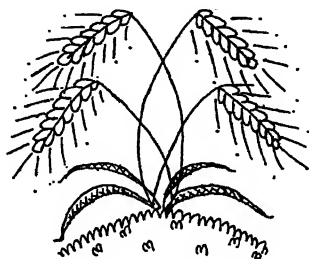
II

There's many a magician in Bagdad and Benares
Can read you—for a penny—what your future
is to be;
And a flock of crazy prophets that by staring at a
crystal
Can fill it with more fancies than there's herring
in the sea;
But *I* know a Wizardry
Can break a freckled egg-shell,
And shake a thistle out of it, in every hawthorn-
tree.

III

There's many a crafty alchemist in Mecca and
Jerusalem;
And Michael Scott and Merlin were reckoned
very wise;

But *I* know a Wizardry
Can take a wisp of sun-fire
And round it to a planet, and roll it through
the skies,
With cities, and sea-ports, and little shining
windows,
And hedgerows and gardens, and loving human
eyes. . . .



ANDERSON M. SCRUGGS

SHADOW FRIEND

I NEVER think of you on sunlit ways,
For you had loved the shadows more than light;
Yours was the mood of sombre autumn days,
Your thoughts were lustrous rivers in the night.
So, when I walk the hills on cloudless noons,
Or gaze upon the sunset's spectral hue,
Or seek the bright narcosis of the dunes
On some lone shore—I never think of you.

But on a night in winter, when the dark
Is filled with mist of rain, and cold, bare trees
Stand etched, like iron, in the silent park,
I know that you are very near in these,—
And think how on a muted, dismal day
You smiled, and in the shadows slipped away.

IDA GRAVES

ENCOUNTER

~~4512~~
~~12507~~
SHOULD one blown street forlorn in stone
hold our two selves at some frail time,
as bubbles join and fall our loves might fall
torn lightly down since love was known,
pricked in our eyes beyond a breath's recall
on darkness once my own.

And I should tremble, speechless and undone,
at this blind shade of love; amazed
as though dead Lazarus had come
summoned before me out against the sun,
bound hand and foot within the dazed
endeavour that must hold him dumb,
and his beloved face
wrapt in a napkin from the dark embrace.



EVELYN SCOTT

VOYAGE

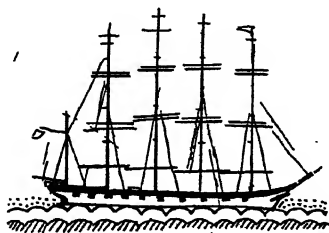
UPRIGHT and proud and isolate,
The mast; already past, the slow land.
Gulls cleave the sky
Into clean remnants of a lost earth motion;
The hooting gulls
That are the carrion angels of the ocean;
The slow gulls who write themselves severely
On the sinking glare,
Twining their pale heads between
Phantom-feathered shoulders and observing
Where all light-ships crash away, extinct.
A thin tincture, a small essence that is star,
A drop, hangs over blued and sooted waters
As they slope and curve and smite
With heavier bludgeoning
The ruddy orchards of the hazy west.
I am alone, and blest.

II

Moon, fine as a shrill whip,
Lashes the clouds,
Shreds gloomy gold
From bitter tendril curled,
Excites a sodden world
To moving tremors.
I feel the waters sway with me.
And all the giddy universe with stars
Beats vastly, like a pale-flapped banner.

III

Over the numb edge of sky
Climb the snow travelling mountains,
Vapour-fuming,
In ice-gray, running hummocks,
Until the moving Andes has turned white with gale.
Jade-stained valleys, soot-blue peaks,
Milk-gushing springs in marble-curved alleys,
Diamond-smoking, choking with refused reflections
Of sunset like the slag eruption of a cold volcano:
In all this vividness-to-animality,
A hell for exquisites.
Even with the forecast of the night.
When the horizon is harsh horn of shadow scarcely
seen,
This gentle bedlam in its vastness,
Seems serene;
And Death here
In black innocence.



HERBERT E. PALMER

LUTE SONG OF THE LADY HÉLOÏSE

ABELARD, my Wisdom's saint,
The night is calling!
And over the fields where flowers faint,
Soft dews are falling.
Our thoughts were too busy through the hot day,
The sun was so parching where the grasses sway.
But now there's an hour to listen—in the shadows
grey,
Abelard!

Without thee, belovèd,
My soul is a spent wilderness;
But thou art my reviving star
And the bright dews of kindness.
Out of Heaven God has sent thee unto me—
An Angel to jewel me for His eternity!
Art not thou His great love and pity over me,
Abelard!

Yet the arrows of shadow menace me
Where the hazel leaves shiver.
Though I know that thy love shall solace me
Through the parched days—for ever.
To-morrow there will be loneliness again,
And maledictions, and bitter death, and pain,
To-morrow—; and yet Death shall be slain,
Abelard!

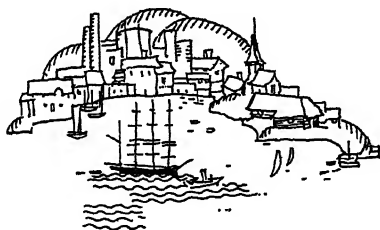
WITTER BYNNER

ENDION

I HAD seen you at Endion, those years before,
Young in the landscape and laughing on the hills,
Sturdy and naked as the sycamore,
Secret as the whippoorwills.

Again I have seen you, in the same places
That meant youth to you then and mean age now.
All you were and are, I have seen in two faces
Under the same bough.

I remember black leaves against the moonlit lake,
And waves that lap and lap unending;
And two wharf-poles there that sleep awake,
One standing straight and one bending.



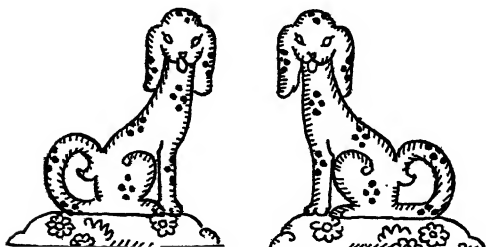
NANCY BYRD TURNER

AN ALLEY CAT

MANGY and gaunt I walk the tiles to-night,
And mangy comes my lady to her tryst;
And nine lives back (nine hundred some have
guessed)

With prouder mien we rambled, ranging light.
Sacred and sleek, on roofs of amethyst
And eaves of ivory we wandered while
A lotus-coloured moon swung up the Nile,
And Memphis slumbered in a silver mist.

O it was heaven just to sit and be
Antiphonal beneath some royal room
Until, for all our sacredness, we heard
Loud hieroglyphic curses flowing free,
And marked a sandal hurtling through the gloom
Hot from the hand of Rameses the Third.



OLIVER JENKINS

NEW ENGLAND COAST

I

UNDER the swirling of this restless sea
Proud ships have dropped to rest in midnight
 graves,
Ended their quests, they are abandoned, free:
Theirs is the quiet any old ship craves.
Stern masters of the tempest, and its slaves,
They have deserved this unmolested sleep;
Far from the wind, the fog, the lashing waves,
Dreaming of glories. They will ever keep
Their luring spirits in the breakers' sweep.

II

Staunch folk have stood upon this ledge before,
Stood here, their hearts buoyed up with native
 pride;
Their rugged faces, like the rugged shore,
Worn, but unconquered, by the constant tide.
Simply they lived, and then as simply died,
Close to the ocean which has captured them
In skeins of beauty; and unterrified,
They wore its magic like a flaming gem,
The one bright jewel in their diadem.

III

People who live along this sturdy coast
Revere the sound of water in their ears;
When they go inland they are spirits lost
Within a labyrinth of lonely fears

And forlorn yearnings. O most bitter years
Away from water and its mighty thunder!
Only to gaze again at sea-worn piers,
And look upon the water swirling under,
Were better than a lifetime's golden plunder.

IV

This, this is my New England. And to me
Always will come a dream of lights aglow
Down some dark harbour of my memory—
Always the sound of water where I go.
And cry of startled gulls when East winds blow;
I must have jagged rocks and roaring seas,
The glint of sunlight on some schooner's prow,
Old, quiet harbors and the noise of quays—
But most, a rover's heart to match with these!



BABETTE DEUTSCH

SOIRÉE

IN the blonde room the lustrous-limbed piano,
Like an incarnate shadow with heart and nerves,
Seems to wait for those fleshly apparitions
Whose passing humours it so darkly serves.

They come; the room contracts with talk and
gesture;
The pictures pale as they nod and curve their
cheeks;
They flutter the music-score with debating fingers;
The keyboard smiles like a wise slave—and speaks.

Their voices rise and float like smoke dissolving
Over the strong prone quivering instrument.
Touch and kiss, grave flower, wine-drenched
laughter
Bloom in a fountain of sound and fade like a scent.

The music gutters at last, is snuffed like a candle.
Gay gossip follows, sweet foods. The farewells
start.

Alone in the ash-blond room the dark piano
Stands like a shining shadow with nerves and heart.

JAMES RORTY

A FREE WOMAN

THE cows are in the barnyard,
The sheep are in the pen;
And she has filled her pilgrim's scrip
And takes the road again.

*Something high and something blind,
Lean, and stripped of fear,
Stranger, not for you or me
Is the Devil's Dear.*

Not for you and not for me—
Who then will she find
Adrift on moving water
Or borne on blowing wind?

In earth the small seed quickens
To flower in its place
And beckon air and water—
This is its state of grace.

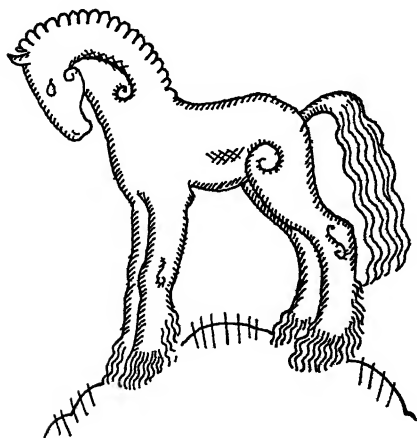
Never the devil's doxie
Shall rest from journeying
Nor dooryard gardens blossom
Nor sober church bells ring.

But lonely men will startle
Hearing the devil's laughter
And leave their sour curds and go
Mad and follow after;

And roadside stones will shiver
And whimper to be free,
And rotting ships will stretch their sails
To plough the devil's sea;

Forgotten graves will render up
Their unforgotten pain—
The dead men would be shriven
Before they die again.

Something high and something blind.
We praise it with our fear.
Stranger, we'll be sooner dead
Than the Devil's Dear.



ALAN PORTER

LOVE'S FRAGILITY

HARD above all things mortal is
To sacrifice true love's return:
We shudder and are bare of bliss,
And our hearts mourn.

For love is lighter than men say;
None has been known as light as he.
His whole profundity is play,
Pleasant to see.

He's born in the unspoken word
Or the quick intercourse of eyes,
A touch, and all his power is stirred;
He sings, he flies.

He veers and trembles at a breath,
As mutable as thistle-down.
He faints, and he is sick to death
For a mere frown.

Some bring report of other lands
Where love's fragility is strong.
They compass him with iron hands;
He suffers long.

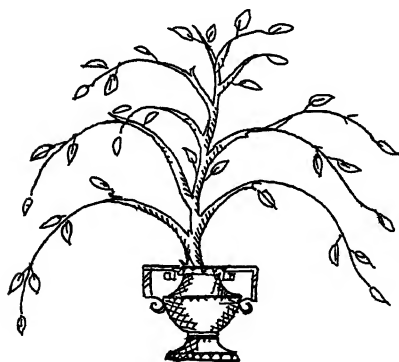
They cast him in a dungeon-keep;
He digs and burrows like a mole:
For forty days denying sleep,
Yet issues whole.

I well believe that love is strong
To bear the heaviest dint of doom;
Confronts the tempest with a song;
Conquers the tomb.

I well believe that love is firm
When love is fostered between two;
Mortality can set no term
 If both be true.

But oh, how weak the love of one,
If counterchange of love's forbid;
If love is plaintive and alone,
 And poor and sad!

The mouth is filled with bitterness;
The echoing air is cold with scorn.
We shudder and are bare of bliss,
 And our hearts mourn.



ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

IMMORTAL AUTUMN

I SPEAK this poem now with grave and level
voice

In praise of autumn of the far horn winding fall
I praise the flower barren fields the clouds the tall
Unanswering branches where the wind makes
sullen noise

I praise the fall it is the human season

now

No more the foreign sun doth meddle at our earth
Enforce the green and thaw the frozen soil to birth
Nor winter yet weigh all with silence the pine bough

But now in autumn with the black and outcast
crows

Share we the spacious world the whispering year is
gone

There is more room to live now the once secret
dawn

Comes late by daylight and the dark unguarded goes

Between the mutinous brave burning of the leaves
And winter's covering of our hearts with his deep
snow

We are alone there are no evening birds we know
The naked moon the tame stars circle at our eaves

It is the human season on this sterile air
Do words outcarry breath the sound goes on and on
I hear a dead man's cry from autumn long since gone

I cry to you beyond upon this bitter air

LEONORA SPEYER

EARLY

THIS gray hour robs the hills of green,
But not of strength and not of height,
And not of sky the clouds between.

Into the dawn a cuckoo calls,
(Sly bird among the dripping trees),
At vague impassive intervals.

The swifts fly lower than the boughs,
With little creaking, busy cries;
A sound of water ripples, flows,

Beyond the garden and the gate,
And down the road and through the town—
(Small mountain-stream in shallow spate)—

And day is here. Its quiet plan,
Inevitable, is not disclosed,
Is not discussed with any man.

Only to those who lie awake
It yields blunt promises of rain,
Which it may break, which it may break.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK

THE GHOST

(From 'Space of Breath')

DISARM this beautiful machine
That lives and walks and sings.
Break it bone by bone
Lest you be broken.

Let it move then, if at all,
Along the ground:
A snake whose back is broken,
A worm in the grass.

Render its colour to the rose again,
Whence it was plundered:
In the rose bright colour is good.
Loose its breath to the bee,
To the free air.

Untwist these nerves
Tied so delicately to the shrewd bones;
Draw them out of the hollow flesh;
Feed them to the birds.
Birds only
Are as swift as they.

Disjoint the hand
From the flying wrist.
Let the fine finger weave
No music.

By a white mountain,
By a lake where ice begins,
Bury the heart,
Bury the brain,
The heart,
The brain.

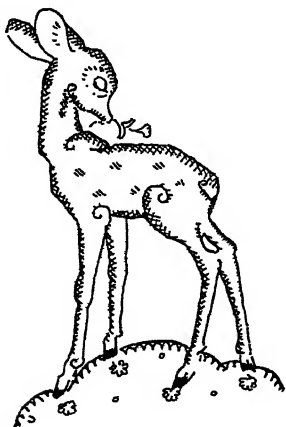
Then sing:
This is dead
That cruel was.
Cover it, snow,
Cover it, grass.
Now is still
What moved before,
Faring
No more.

Snow and sleet,
Wind, rain,
Rot heart and brain.

Then sit contented at your window.
Watch the snow fall.
Listen to the thunder of the avalanches in
the mountains,
And all
Night sleep a quiet sleep,
Passionless,
Deep.

But:
Spring in her season will assemble
The torn nerve and the severed tongue.
Up from the sweating ground will tremble
The colour of rose from the colour of dung.

The hands will fly from left to right,
Finding their proper bone and vein.
The heart will trek ere it is night.
The empty skull be full again.
The worm-sucked eye once more a prism,
The lips poised to kiss or sting,
The ankle sharp at its old rhythm,
The ghost will walk, in the armour of Spring.



VIOLA GERARD GARVIN

SEPTEMBER

THE moon is down. Bird planets wing
The brilliant path of memory,
Seeking a lost Egyptian spring,
Along the margin of the sky.

Low in the west, the lotus buds
In a late flame of petals, and
Eastward, a Nile-green river floods
With light its dark, star-dusty strand.

These are but momentary — soon
Darkness shall chide such dreams away,
Gathering the stars in, while the moon
Comes up her grave, accustomed way.

This is that month whose peace shall keep
Smooth the ripe hours of the night,
Hushing those jasmin-scents asleep,
That troubled summer with delight.

And warm it is, since gold September
Winnows the harvestable grain
In fields too drowsy to remember
Or springing green, or winter rain.

Here is no grief nor fevered passion,
Beauty but heals, love does no hurt:
It is a month designed to fashion
Fruit from the blossom of the heart.

G. K. CHESTERTON

SONNETS IN SUMMER HEAT

I TOO have dreamed of dark titanic roses
Hot in the Hanging Gardens of the Sun,
Grass-blanced and blasted where the Unspeakable
One

Blazed in the mirror of the face of Moses;
Or goblin gourds the slow green dawn discloses
Enormous in quiet isles no sail has won,
Or purple Persian forest crushed, whereon
Some rock-hewn monster like a realm reposes.

But though I sought dark fruits that thrive in
thunder

And dusky sunflowers turned to alien suns,
I did not seek for wonders, but for wonder,
Nor these wild images but more innocent ones:
I looked for my lost eyes: which long ago
Saw one red daisy in the flower-pot grow.

II

Tall tiger rocks striped with the strata sand
Against the devouring glories of the sun,
Dry wells like dragons drink the sands that run,
Red and dark grey and purple and silver sand:
And all the multi-coloured waste is fanned
With fans of dissolution and eclipse,
The hollow swells with horror and the hill slips
The changing rocks of this enchanted land.

So moves the Desert: and the whole world's pride
Is dust, yet knew itself for more than mire,
When driven with the blast of all the world's desire,
Dry-throated thirst deep as the desert cried
When God ungirt of column of cloud and fire
Came out of Egypt to be crucified.

III

Blue with the bloom of darkest grapes the night,
The fruited night hangs swollen, as some divine
New Deluge not of water but of wine
Might drown us not in death, but in delight:
And purple tropic torrents from the height
Madden the world's weeds from their flat design
And new shapes dance and nameless colours shine
Dizzying deep roots: the Dionysian light.

The heavens are sealed: and though we thrive we
thirst
For that most holy Vine that holds the sky,
The cloud the seer called bottles, that do not burst,
Abide the breaking of that ancient cry:
I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine
Till with dead men I drink a deathless wine.



DAVID MORTON

WOOD MOMENT

WE shall have little enough to keep, we two.
Out of this moment that is passing, now:
A little memory how the light came through
In such frail patterns as the woods allow,
And how no wind nor any sound was here
To break this spell of silence that has seemed
Part of a stranger spell that holds you near
A little while—like something that I dreamed.

Little enough—the rest will soon go by,
Pitiful speech that found no word to say
Beyond the language of a glance or sigh;
Only, some year, some fine and careless day,
I shall stop suddenly, seeing the way
Of woods with sunlight—how the patterns lie.

MONK GIBBON

BEING BUT MEN

BEING but men, not gods, we'll need take pride
In all that gives the lie to this mean state;
All moments borne beyond the common tide,
All littleness of heart made briefly great;
All beauty vouched with sudden indrawn breath,
A word, a turn of head, a lovely look,
A gesture grave, a phrase defying death,
Or a chance sentence in an unsought book.



DANIEL WHITEHEAD HICKY

INSCRIPTION FOR A SUNDIAL

SENSELESS with beauty pressing like a flame
Around me in this sunlit garden-close—
Blue of the larkspur, yellow of the rose,
White lilies holier than any name—
What can I be that I have earned a place
Where tulips ring their gold cathedral bell,
Where poppies lean upon the air and tell
Their scarlet secrets with an upturned face?
What right have I to know the touch of things
Intangible as wind and shadows' wings,
Things that can never know there is an hour,
A day, a year, only eternity;
Oh, what am I to stand here patiently
And count away the heartbeats of a flower?



WILFRID GIBSON

THE BLIND STRANGER

SHE switched her torch on in that shadowed place;

And, startled, saw a strained and staring face,
Dead white against a tree-trunk, where he stood
Stillter than any tree in that dark wood,
A stranger with the look of one whose sight
May never know the darkness from the light,
Whose blank, unblinking eyes, though unaware
Of her existence even, appeared to stare
Right through her body till she seemed almost
To divine beneath their spell into a ghost,
A wispy vapour floating in the air. . . .

She dropped the torch: and daylight found her there
Alone, and senseless, underneath the trees:
But soon the kindly light and freshening breeze
Restored her; and she rose and went her way.

Yet, even in the ardent blaze of day,
She shivered; and her heart could not forget
Those blind unblenching eyes upon her set
With an unseeing gaze that seemed to see
Sheer through the veil of her mortality:
And hour by hour life dwindled till she seemed
The ghost of her own self; the children screamed,
Suddenly coming on her in the shade,
And scuttled homeward trembling and afraid;
While she went onward through the failing light
To seek the stranger in the wood's deep night.

HERBERT E. PALMER

SONNET: AFTERMATH OF STORM AND WAR

AND over the waste of barren moorland guttered
The bloody sunset, the wild daylight's ending.
And I, defeated, with slow steps ascending,
Cast my spent will into the night, and shuttered
The tempest from my soul. Oh, lightly fluttered
The breeze, the wounds of the gashed grey skies
 deep blending
With mine; — my hope on those red signs depending.
‘The shepherd’s promise! Wait!’ the far West
 muttered.

But when I reached the cairn the sun was gone.
And through the opposing darkness rose in shroud
The scarred and haggard visage of the moon.

She held no dreaming promise in her eyes;
Plainly I marked her from behind a cloud
Greeting the blue-black dragons of the skies.

W. H. DAVIES

OLD AUTUMN

IS this old Autumn standing here,
Where wind-blown fruits decay;
Dressed up in limp, bedraggled flowers
That Summer cast away?

Within whose mist no dewdrops shine,
And grass, once green, goes yellow;
For whom no bird will sing or chirp,
On either Ash or Willow?

If this is his poor, pelted face,
With dead leaves soaked in rain,
Come, Winter, with your kindly frost
That's almost cruelly sane;

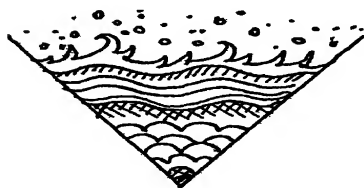
Take him, with his unwanted life,
To his last sleep and end—
Like the cat that cannot find a home,
And the dog that has no friend.

G. M. HORT

REQUIEM FOR A COURTESAN

AFTER long riot
Of guests unquiet,
Who, lord-like, claimed it,
Despoiled, and shamed it,
This fair House rests,
Shuttered from vision,
Free of its guests!

Free, too, of its Owner,
Whose strange profession
Gave all permission
To violate it. . . .
Poor, shiftless Loaner,
To gain possession,
She'd to vacate it!



RICHARD CHURCH

MUSEUM PIECE

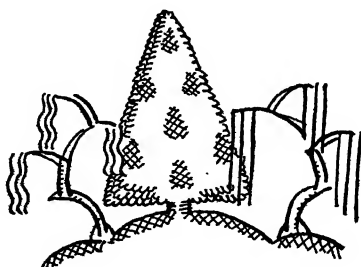
THAT afternoon in the Museum
I felt my spirit die from the present,
Slip from the clasp of loved hand
And touch the dust of a lost land.
There I met a Saxon child,
Under her finger-bones a ring
Whose gold was faded, as in Spring
Rainwashed primroses shine.
A little garnet blind with time
Was set within it, shared the sleep
Of milkwhite skin and August hair,
That hair of Autumn wheat, with deep
Sunflecks, and the windy shadows
Kissing the gold, and settling there
Like happy thought on innocence.

And now the garnet glowed, the gold
Clung to living flesh that gleamed
And pulsed as the blood flowed beneath.
From the awakened eyes there streamed
The light of mind: and I heard breath
Make music in her mouth, not old
Harsh rustling from the grave of thought,
But tenderness, sweet inquiry,
Quick with suspense, rapid with running
After life, after colour, tasting these
With timid, child-bold ecstasies.

It was a voice I knew, calling
'Father! Father!' in the Saxon speech;

Falling on my heart, falling
From a century where I could not reach,
Shouting over her shoulder as she ran
'I have left a message! Make haste!
Follow me, Father! Follow! Follow!'

Striving after her, to come to her side
And clasp my darling, my spirit died.
Echoed in my ears 'Make haste! Make haste!'
And the faith of that eager 'Follow! Follow!'
Then the dust of the Museum settled low,
The dust of time and human waste,
And I said, my voice drawn thin and hollow,
Said to my loved one, 'Shall we go?'



ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

THE STARFISH

TRIANGLES are commands of God
And independent lie
Outside our brains as wild geese slow
Travelling down the sky.

And this fine-pointed thing that sucks
Its slow way as it can
Has as sure a hold on God
As great Aldeberan.

It has as large a power to please
Any eye that gazes
Upon its harmony of lines
As ancient Attic vases.

Pentagon for Gawain's shield,
Five points of chivalry,
In ancient laws and musical
It creeps below the sea.

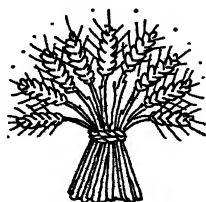
Its fingers are on God's own hand,
Its just name is a star,
Through æons it remains as right
As birth and dying are.

ROBERT NATHAN

TO A FRIEND

SO to distil the spirit from the grain,
Men take the essence rather than the meat,
The strong and fiery humours which have lain
Through sun and shower waiting in the wheat.
The spring's persuasion and the summer heat
Make a fierce fluid which is left to turn
Milder and mellow, likeable and sweet
In the charred bosom of a wooden urn.

So in my heart the hidden hand distils
His untried juices from the flowery loam.
You are the cask in which that liquor spills,
The cradle of my essence, and my home;
My love, my wisdom, and my sweetest song,
Wherein my spirit ripens and grows strong.



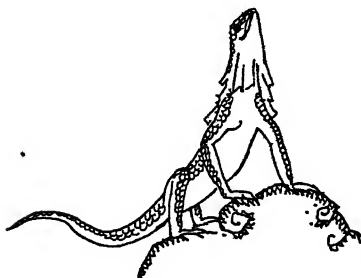
WALTER DE LA MARE

ECHOES

(A Rhyme for Children)

THE sea laments
The livelong day,
Lone on its waste of sand;
Cries back the wind from the whispering shore—
No word I understand:

Yet echoes in my heart a voice—
As far, as near, as these—
The wind that weeps,
The solemn surge
Of strange and lonely seas.



HUMBERT WOLFE

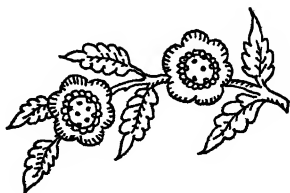
THE POET'S WINTER

YOU shining company! there waits without
the quiet rooms of heaven in the snow
one who distraught by equal love and doubt
now seeks to enter, and now turns to go.

He has heard you speaking gently from afar,
and was drawn hither sweetly against his will,
but scarce can see the window for the star,
set like a lamp upon the window-sill.

Nor is it actual snow, though banked and driven
against your door that holds him from the latch,
but deeper drifts to music heaped in heaven
than foot can measure or than time dare snatch.

Yet though benighted, wandered, and in storm,
no need to bid him for an alms to enter,
who walks in the mere shadow of song as warm
as a lamb folded in a poet's winter.



HUMBERT WOLFE

THE LEAFY DEAD

AH, beyond contempt and all blame
when the dust is allayed, and strife
is an echo of the vexed name
that sorrow used in life,
love walks, the darkness shaking
as a sower shakes the seed,
as a boy in the meadows making
a flute from a wayside reed—
wood-smoke and grass in frost-time
so clear as these; so sharp
as though he fingered lost-time
and played it for a harp,
as though Anchises the olden
cried to Aeneas in the shade,
and the leafy dead blew golden,
and were no more afraid.



THOMAS CALDECOT CHUBB

TWO IN SIGHT OF FLORENCE

(*Trecento*)

THE stranger with the lean and bitter face,
Sharp nose, ironic lips, and deep-set eyes,
Leaned toward the other guest, a red-cloaked
merchant

With a soft belly and a flabby jowl,
And said to him: 'You want not love, but wine;
Not heavenly love, but the crushed Tuscan grape
To wash down a fat pasta, garlic-sauced,
Followed by a mess of birdlets, nearly roasted,
After being smeared with greasy olive oil.'

The stranger with the lean and bitter face,
Harsh, biting voice, uncompromising jaw,
Leaned toward the other guest: 'Not love, but food,
Fat luxury, soft comfort, a hot bed

Whereon to take your sensuous delight,
Bought for so much, after the day is done.'
But then he paused, and asked: 'Or would you march
Across a vale of flint to see her face

And have no more reward than that she smiled
And offered part of the love of God to you?
Would you walk barefoot on ice to have one flower,
Tossed from her distant hand as courtesy?

Would you climb to heaven only to hear her name
Chimed by the angels like a sacred tune,
Or walk, because of her, fearless through Hell?'
He rose and his wrists tightened: 'I have done this.
I have gone down to the last icy circle
Of my own mind and painted what I saw.

I have flown higher than ever a song flew
 Or a sun-seeking lark at break of day.
 I have stood before the pearly throne of God,
 And touched the snaky scales of the lord of ill.
 And all because one time I saw a girl
 Walk in the sunlight by an arching bridge
 By a slow river, and but smile at me—
 Once as a boy, once very long ago.
 And since that day I have known hate and exile,
 Rebuff, self-question, loneliness, hurt pride.
 I have been a wanderer on the face of earth.
 I have been a beggar at the feet of kings.
 And yet have no regret.' Saying which words,
 He turned and crossed the inn-room, and he stood
 For a moment, like a proud yet fallen angel,
 Half prince, yet one half pitiable, as he looked,
 With something far too pitiful for pride,
 Across the valley toward a gleaming cluster
 Of square, brown towers, thick walls, and reddish
 domes
 Where Dante Alighieri who would be
 One day a legend like a prince of God
 Might never set his foot, however bitter
 An exile's bread, how steep a stranger's stairs.



D. P. McGUIRE

HER DAY IS OVER

HERE she will sleep, for the day is over,
Lay golden blossom upon her now,
On the golden bosom and golden brow,
And a rose on her lips for the lips of her lover;
Here she will sleep, nor will she wake
At the coming of day and the song and the light,
Neither for joy's sake nor pain's sake nor love's
sake;
The day is over. O, rest her, night!



FREDA C. BOND

SNOW SCENE

NOW light the chandelier,
Turn on the music box,
The snow is here!
Feathers from fairy-tale flocks
Of plump geese fall and float
Across the window pane,
Time strikes a note
That chimed in Victoria's reign.

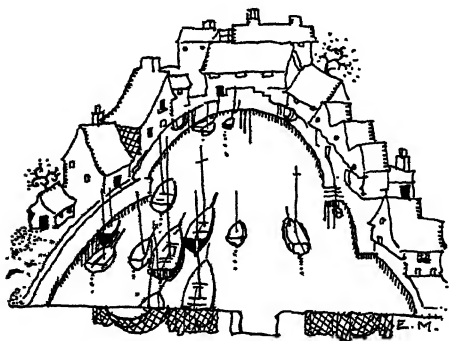
Forget the world of every day
While crystals wink and candles glow,
Let tinkling silver music play,
And watch the timeless snow
Drift as it drifted years and years ago.



ELIZABETH BIBESCO

SONNET

THERE is no comfort in the sensual world
For those, who, seeking fire, are brought to heel
By answered questions. How can sense reveal
The senses' magic carelessly unfurled?
Our bodies chastened by our mind's desire
Explore all life in search of that strong fever
Of anonymity, that must for ever
Exalt the ash and justify the fire.
Is it our cowardice that seeks to find
Annihilation both of pride and shame,
The ash that proves allegiance to the flame
Links grey to gold and Godhead to mankind?
Yet we remain the victims of our spirit
That fails to find a flesh to disinherit.



CATHAL O'BYRNE

NAZARETH

MARY the Mother when dusk was come
Busied Herself with the evening meal,
Hushed for that hour was the spindle's hum,
And the clickety-clack of Her round, brown
wheel.

With clustered berries, under cool, green leaves,
Crisp cresses, and loaves of barley bread,
Sweet figs from the vine beneath the eaves
And milk in methers, the board was spread.

And when was relished the wholesome fare,
The table made comely and free from stain,
Then did Mary once more to Her wheel repair
And bend to Her task of love again.

And holy the work of the Mother's hand,
As the moon came over the low, blue hill,
When the shadows lengthened along the land
And the sparrows under the eaves were still.

And—strange the thought!—what a wondrous
thing
If God's Mother, throned on the heavenly floor,
Should hear, above seraphim, Her spindle sing
And remember earth's humble tasks once more;

And in quiet dusks, when the airs are cool
On Heaven's blue hills, let her fingers feel
For the Seamless Robe's thread of lengthening wool
And the work-worn rim of Her round, brown
wheel.

ROBERT LIDDELL LOWE

ON A SINGING GIRL

(*Remembering Elinor Wylie*)

WHAT hand has hushed
The singing throat
And latched the lips
Forever to the note

Of song? Was it
The wind that came
Her way and turned
To frost the spirit's proud poised flame?

The fragile flesh,
The blood, and bone
Are given to dust
And oblivion. . . .

Curve tenderly,
O Death, your long
Lean hands to hold
The broken bird, the shattered song.

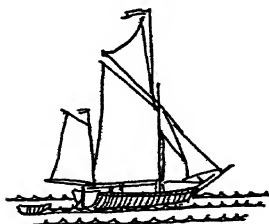


SIR WILLIAM WATSON

THE LIGHTHOUSE OF LOVE

O LOVE is like the glow
From lonely lighthouse poured -
That gleam it doth bestow
On sail and mast and cord,
When shore and ocean are
Unkissed by moon or star,
And Dawn in gloom afar
Still sheathes her golden sword.

My soul, a vessel frail,
Is launched on waters wide,
And in the swooping gale
Must through the surges ride.
But while yon lighthouse there
Makes night and tempest fair,
If Fate my barque upbear,
Let Love be lamp and guide.



ERNEST HARTSOCK

STRANGE SPLENDOUR

AGES of earth are in me. I am made
Of time's immortal matter, which is dust.
I am old atoms in a new parade;
I am new iron miracled from rust.

This that is I has not been I forever;
Once it was pearl or spider, flame or fly.
Nature's destination is endeavour:
There is no dust that beauty will let die.

This that is flesh of me may once have ridden
The saddle of the stallions of the sun
Which leap from hidden glory unto hidden,
Knowing their goal and origin are one.

Lost among sulphurous meteors I come;
Vanished in smoky mystery I go,
Where cooling comets crackle like a drum
To ether's weird electric tremolo.

From space to space the flaming planets scatter,
Crashing and splitting in the black abyss.
Still onward hurls the starry march of matter:
Each Armageddon is a Genesis.

There is no height or depth beyond the border
Of isolated vision in the earth;
And all there is is cataclysmic order
Moving in rhythms of ironic mirth.

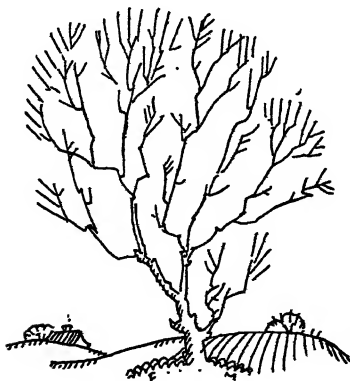
There is no East nor West. Only an aching
Cyclone of chaos hurtling forever on.
There is no day nor night. Only the breaking
Of eerie shadows in eternal dawn.

Where shall we go who came from conflagrations
Unkindled and unquenched within the Vast?
Oblivion is the home of destinations
And darkness is our domicile at last.

Sick lust leans fevered on the arm of death.
The vitals quiver and the heart goes hot.
Fear at the throat bites out the guttering breath,
Havoc is conqueror where hope is not.

Now as I pause on midnight's promontory
By the grim currents of infinity,
Sudden the revelation breaks in glory—
The desperate strange splendour of To Be.

Out of the chaos and the dark and thunder,
Flung to new glamour in earth's diagram,
I stand upon the citadel of wonder
And shout the terrible miracle—*I am!*

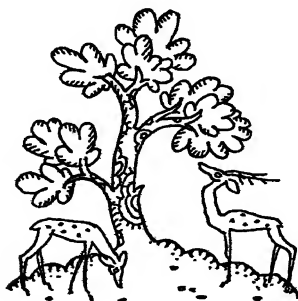


A. E. COPPARD

FORESTER'S SONG

WILL you take a sprig of hornbeam?
Will you try a twig of pine?
Or a beam of dusky cedar
That the ivy dare not twine?
My larch is slim and winsome,
There is blossom on the sloe;
Timber tell you, tell you timber,
How the trees do grow!

There are thorns on yonder mountain,
An olive on the crag,
And I leave a knotted thicket
As a chamber for the stag;
Lovely oak and spangled sycamore,
The quince and mistletoe;
Willow will you, will you willow,
How the trees do grow!



CONRAD AIKEN

THE VERGE

YOU went to the verge, you say, and came back safely?

Some have not been so fortunate,—some have fallen.

Children go lightly there, from crag to crag,
And coign to coign—where even the goat is wary—
And make a sport of it. . . . They fling down pebbles,

Following, with eyes undizzied, the long curve,
The long slow outward curve, into the abyss,
As far as eye can follow; and they themselves
Turn back, unworried, to the here and now . . .
But you have been there, too?—

—I saw at length
The space-defying pine, that on the last
Outjutting rock has cramped its powerful roots.
There stood I too: under that tree I stood:
My hand against its resinous bark: my face
Turned out and downward to the fourfold kingdom.

The wind roared from all quarters. The waterfall
Came down, it seemed, from Heaven. The mighty sound

Of pouring elements—earth, air, and water—
The cry of eagles, chatter of falling stones—
These were the frightful language of that place.
I understood it ill, but understood—

—You understood it? Tell me, then, its meaning.
It was an all, a nothing, or a something? .

Chaos, or divine love, or emptiness?
Water and earth and air and the sun's fire?
Or else, a question, simply?—

—Water and fire were there,
And air and earth; there too was emptiness:
All, and nothing, and something too, and love.
But these poor words, these squeaks of ours, in
which
We strive to mimic, with strained throats and
tongues,
The spawning and outrageous elements—
Alas, how paltry are they! For I saw—

—What did you see?

—I saw myself and God.
I saw the ruin in which godhead lives:
Shapeless and vast: the strewn wreck of the world
Sadness unplumbed: misery without bound.
Wailing I heard, but also I heard joy.
Wreckage I saw, but also I saw flowers.
Hatred I saw, but also I saw love . . .
And thus, I saw myself.

—And this alone?

—And this alone awaits you, when you dare
To that sheer verge where horror hangs, and
tremble
Against the falling rock; and looking down,
Search the dark kingdom. It is to self you come—
And that is God. It is a seed of seeds:
Seed for disastrous and immortal worlds.
It is the answer that no question asked.

EDEN PHILLPOTTS

TO WHOM THEY SING

BEHIND a flake of cloudy fire
The sky-lark spirals, higher, higher
To shrill a silvery offering
Before the sun, his only king.

Now throb and sob the dewy dales
With rapture of small nightingales,
Who worship where—august, serene—
Reigns the white moon, their only queen.

Within his lonely, leafy lane
The blackbird lifts a pensive strain—
A shy and introspective elf
Who's singing only to himself.

Upon the ruby-beaded elm
Of March, through every woodland realm,
The storm-cock's glassy bell he rings
And to the winds of heaven sings.

In the Scotch fir at morning light
Plump birds, with opal bosoms bright,
Shine cooing, cooing—forest doves
Who sing of nothing but their loves.

When Adam and his lady fell
From out their horticultural dell
The robin said, 'I'm coming too,
Because I only sing for you.'

V. SACKVILLE WEST

KING'S DAUGHTER

I

IF I might meet her in the lane,
Riding a raven horse
That trailed his golden halter loose
And snuffed the golden gorse,

If I might see her riding high
In her little golden coat,
Borne on his prancing as the waves
Carry a little boat,

If I might see her with her hand
Looping the scarlet rein,
If I might see her at the turn
Come riding down the lane,—

If I should spy her by the lake
Sweeping her little harp
To the blunt-nosed circle, golden-ringed,
Of old enchanted carp,

If I should see the ebon swan
With scarlet beak sail by,
And pause to catch the fragile notes
Dripped from her melody,

If I should see the spindly crane
Stand sentinel in the reeds
To catch the morsels of her song
Float out like wind-blown seeds,—

Or should I see her cross the snow
With a gray wolf at her heels,
On the plain between the black, black firs
When the moon remotely steals

Up past the hamlet's gabled roofs
And hangs above the church,
And turns her golden coat to ash,
And pales the ghostly birch,

And should I see her glide away
Into the fir-trees' night,
Then should I know that I had read
Her changeling soul aright.

II

How shall I haunt her separate sleep,
That in the glades of night
Her dreams may keep a tryst with mine,
And be not parted quite?

Tales will I tell her for her dreams
In those nocturnal glades,
Wherein processional shall pass
The dim and lovely shades;

Where some shall pass in rose-red silks,
And some shall pass in rags,
And some shall ride in scarlet cloaks
Beneath the windy flags.

And one shall be a flute-player,
And she shall hear his note
Fading among the blue valleys,
Vagabond, remote.

And one a rider dark in mail
With steel-tipped lance held high,
Shall pass along a lonely road
Upon his way to die.

The stars like taper-points shall shine
Within his helm and greaves;
The pacing footfall of his horse
Shall bruise on drifted leaves.

And one shall pause beside her couch,
And bend and whisper low
Some music of a foreign tongue,
But what, she shall not know;

Only, some echo of his speech
Melodious on the air,
Shall tremble still against her heart,
My lovely messenger.

III

Goosey, goosey gander,
Whither would you wander?
Upstairs, downstairs,
And in my lady's chamber.

He shall see my lady
When she comes at night
Carrying her candle
And her roses white.

He shall see my lady
When she sets her flowers
Down before the mirror
In the secret hours;

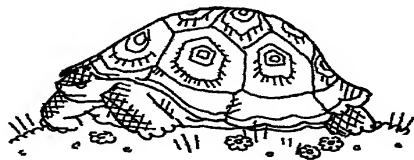
When she sets her candle
And the mirror gleams,
And she before her looking-glass
Slips her shift, and dreams.

Whiter than the candle wax,
Whiter than the rose,
Is her young and lovely throat,
As goosey gander knows.

He shall watch her gravely,
Perched upon a chair;
He shall see her lift her arms
And loose her golden hair;

He shall see her cross her room,
All gold, and white as milk,
With little naked goose-girl feet
And shift of clinging silk.

Goosey, goosey gander,
Will you be my spy?
Let into my lady's room
No one dare to pry.



KATHARINE TYNAN

REQUIEM

(For Arthur Darley)

HE has taken his lovely music with him
This night when stars and angels sing.
What tender cadence, perfect rhythm,
Betwixt the bow and the taut string!
Dark Rose, there is one in that high bliss
Runs to his little daughter's kiss.

This is no pupil striving, learning
Some strange and difficult instrument,
O, hear his violin soaring, yearning,
Full of high passion, rich content.
His eyes towards God turn in surprise,
To meet his little daughter's eyes.

Dark Rose, they are in the stainless weather,
Full in the Sun of Halidom.
They keep the Feast of Love together,
Yet something's lacking till you come.
Droop not, nor all your petals close,
Like to a rose unwatered, Rose!

He is God's violinist for ever.
Droop not, Dark Rose, so sad, so pale,
Lest in the height of his endeavour
The wings of music flutter and fail,
Some discord come because your sighs
Reach him through the high ecstasies.

HORACE GREGORY

O MORS ÆTERNA

BE for a little while eternal,
singing with all the songs in your body
but making no sound.

The Rose of Sharon singing in an old city
was eternal suddenly
for a little while.

And the mountains fell away,
and the city sank into earth again,
and the voices of dead men came from the ground
crying incest and poverty and murder
(all in the many dead years
that had sent them into the earth)—
but now rising, crying against the world
and mortal sun and moon and stars,
against life and the masters
in purple victories, clothed with iron wars.
For a little while
the Rose of Sharon sang eternally,
until the city came round her again
and there was no sound.



PHYLLIS MÉGROZ

THIS IS NOT I . . .

THIS is not I, this simulacrum treading
The ordered round within the shell of clay,
This is not I about whose brow is spreading
The flaming aureole of ebbing day;
This is not I whose soul beyond the casements
Beholds Life locked with too-uxorious death,
Till Time, grown weary of their pale enlacements,
Puts all the stars to darkness in a breath;
This is not I, this cool rehearsed fantastic,
That thrusts and parries in a neat defence,
And with a final geste iconoclastic,
Doth crown its brows with mock indifference.

This is not I—immortal I was made,
This is not I, or else my self's betrayed.



JOAN BARTON

ONE SHARP DELIGHT

QUIET in the frowsy air, it yields
Its fan of boughs darkly towards the sky,
Hurt by the shame, filth and indignity
Of this harsh land of stones, not fields;

This patient ash-tree growing here
In burning suns, dense fogs, and sooty rains,
Hemmed in by walls and houses, yet remains
Lovely, inscrutable, austere.

Yet the long night no comfort brings,
With darkness comes no sweet and secret scent
Of flowers or frostbound fields, no echoes lent
By the clear notes the linnet sings.

But when stars fade, and from the sea
The moon draws in her beams and braids her hair,
And over the dim roofs to this blank square
The dayspring comes, reluctantly—

Ah, then one sharp delight it knows,
One perfect hour, incomparable and rare:
It sees the thin mists rise and all the air
Put on the colour of a rose.

WILFRED CHILDE

HARDWICK ARRAS

I DREAM of a White Hart that through the meadows

Of an unending tapestry runs and runs,
And through great forests lit by languid suns
It leaps, and into gulfs of velvet shadows
Plunges with pearl-pale sides and on and on
Tireless and fearless races, still pursued
By hounds in gaping-mouthèd multitude,
And huntsmen clad in rich caparison,
On steeds with fiery manes and nostrils red;
Yet ever safe it bears its amber horns
And hoofs of dimmest green and silver tail
Through infinite shades and daisy-mottled fields,
Betwixt slim trunks of many a magic vale,
And under lonely towers, which virgin morns
Illumine, and its swift pace never yields,
Calm, wingèd, beautiful, unhurried.



HAMISH MACLAREN

FOOL'S SONGS IN A WINDMILL

Winter

BE off, wind, vagabond—scare
Away to sea!
With your *Who's this, Who's there,*
Trouble not me.

Lie down then, lullaby, do,
If stay you will;
But ask me no more *Who? who?*
Wind, wind, be still.

Spring

Blow wind, blow away trouble—
Ring-a-bell, ding-dong, flute and fiddle:
Shout, starling, that life is a bubble
And a hey diddle diddle!

Blow along, blow on the grasses—
Blow the black rooks flocking!
Mock, starling, at joy that passes
Still as you're mocking—

But, O wind, maybe to-morrow,
With your warm flower-breath,
Will you come, wind, and blow away sorrow
And blow away death?

THOMAS THORNELLY

A GARDEN ROSE

ONCE battling in the wild, men bore thee here,
As they had borne some warrior to his tent;
Nursed thee and lavished on thee nutriment,
And fenced thee from each foe thou had'st to fear.

Indwelling power, that scarce could hold its place,
Might surfeit here, but, loth to unbend the bow
And nurse a napkined talent, it bade thee grow
To more imperious beauty, statelier grace.

And shall not men, like thee beset by foes,
That kept each nerve, each sinew, long astrain,
Like thee released, the loosened power retain
That turned the wilding to the garden rose?

Great shame were ours, if, in equal case,
Flowers keep their gains, men but their former
place.



A. E.

LOGOS

WAKE, drowsy spirit in the ear,
The voices in that quivering shell
Echo the Zodiac. You may hear
The planets ringing like a bell.

Your sister spirit in the eyes
Pierced them with its own light to see
The high-hung lanterns in the skies,
Rousing its own infinity.

Within that murmuring cave, the ear,
Far borne a myriad voices throng.
Be still and listen. You shall hear
The universe revealed as song.



F. L. LUCAS

TO THE GRACES

YOUR quiet altar after all was best,
Fair sisters. Louder faiths grow cold.
Not you forged earth's foundations; but you
blessed

What flowers her deserts hold.
Not yours alone is power that does not perish;
But yours is Youth. Only what your hands cherish,
Grows not old.

Thebes and Ecbatana, Babel, Nineveh,
All human grandeur's utmost reign—
Time seals them his. They bow down silently
Before the years' disdain.
But you are young as the poppy's banner burning
On their ruined towers to hail sweet June returning
Once again.

Not yours the mouths that justify God's ways,
By whom the depths of Hell are sung;
Deathless they seem, yet aged. Green their bays,
Yet Time has touched their tongue. . . .
But Sappho's grace, La Fontaine's quiet laughter,
The voice of Herrick—these heed no hereafter,
These are young.

Life's greatest things come seldom; seldom blows
The whirlwind, or the mountain quakes.
But you are with us in each gust that goes
Down the green corn, or shakes
Boughs like a bird alighting, or sets a-quiver
The forest's beauty, asleep in some still river,
As it wakes.

Daughters of God, you know what man's life is,
How brief, and yet how long the while—
Its epics, falls of sparrows; its tragedies
Half farces, and half vile;
How every hero's sword at last grows brittle,
How his dream fades, and night comes in a little—
And you smile.

All else turns vanity; but yours the day
Of little things, that grow not less.
Our moments fly—enough if on their way
You lent them loveliness.
Alone of Gods, you lie not; yours no Heaven
That totters in the clouds—what you have given,
We possess.

You cannot lift life's burden. Nothing can.
You make it seem worth while to bear.
You cannot change the destiny of Man.
Death comes. Yet even there
You taught the Hellene not to shudder blindly
Before Sleep's Brother, but see him calm, half
kindly,
Young and fair.

Our age forgets you, denies you, shouts you hence.
With staring eyes and lips astrain,
The Goth rides back; we worship violence,
Trampling your silken chain.
Let be. Let them triumph out the hour assigned
them.
All shoutings pass, and silence falls behind them.
You remain.

T. STURGE MOORE

NOSTALGIA

ALAS! O Hellas lorn and whist,
Statues on culminant crags of long
Nude promontories no more list
To islands glamorous with song!

Unmatchable Acropolis,
Thou blossom rooted in mean lanes
Of small plain homes, can aught that is
Console us for thy shattered fanes?

Afar the hardy frugal youth
That was—and dared—the heroic deed—
The mind on beauty fed, which truth
Could not confuse with her drugg'd mead!

Our hearts, like icebergs drifting south,
There strand, where ruins are divine,
And neighbour to a baked rock's drouth,
Lose form and substance, dreaming thine,

Dead land, still hugged by thy warm sea,
Nymphless, unfauned, uncentaured!
Only thy Sphinx still potently
Smiles when we ask her what she said!

VIRGINIA MOORE

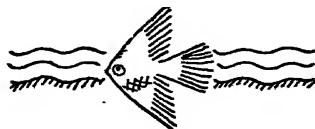
FORERUNNER TO RAIN

AT five o'clock the fear began;
The day got ready, like a man
Who pauses, crouches, breathing deep
Before a leap.

The wind stood wondering in the oak,
The air moved, a branch broke;
A wound as old as human grief
Bled in a leaf.

'Now,' said the grass. 'Now. Now.'
A shawl of shadow draped a bough.
Peculiar light over the hill
Shuddered, until

'Anything,' I said in fear,
'Impossible could happen here,'
When cold and accurate as a spell
The large drops fell.



MERLE COLBY

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday Morning, near Wheeling, on the Ohio, June, 1810

HOLD up, hold up, you Jersey folk,
Fetch in the reins, you 'Ghany men!
All Yanks and Dutchies halt your yoke:
The foremost wagon's boggled again.
Bogged down hub-deep in 'Hio clay—
The Devil take these watersheds.
Hi-Yup! The foremost wagon, hey!
Pour leather in them tender-breds!
(Here shall the horses bow their heads.

Come up, come up, you wagoneers,
Hitch up your belts a notch or two;
Bring on that team of bull-neck steers—
There's work ahead for steers to do.
On-hook them horses' traces, Jem,
Yoke on them critters. Jonas, peel
Your coat and fling it under 'em—
They've lost their footen—let 'em feel. . . .
(In this place shall the oxen kneel.

You jauntin-men, you 'Ginny lads,
You Methody one-horse preacher folks,
Light down from off your drivers' pads
And put your weight against them spokes.
She's clear. Hi-yup, and let 'em roll!
Pass on the word we roll again.
—The Devil takes the Devil's toll,
But can't keep Us from travelen!
(And all the people shall say Amen.

SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN

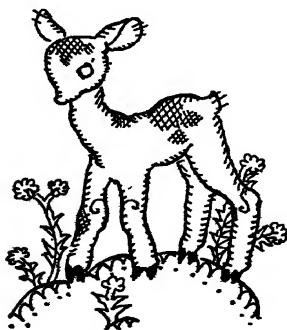
OBSERVATION

LITTLE by little we subtract
Faith and Fallacy from Fact,
The Illusory from the True,
And starve upon the Residue.

What is the sense in tears or laughter?
The Root of things is what we're after:
But fallen trees will spill their fruit
And worms and darkness keep the root.

Fallen days will spill their sun,
But paper heavens must be won,
And so, while we geometrise,
A bird out-twits us, twice as wise.

Mere matter is not all of marrow,
The harvest leaps not from the harrow,
And a push-button will not light
Joy by day or stars by night.



R. C. TREVELYAN

THE WOOD

NEAR my house is a wood full of wonders,
Dearer to my heart than many a dear friend.
With each season it puts on some new beauty.
In May between its old birches and oaks
Bluebells spread into lawns and wind in lanes.
Then splendour after splendour of scarlet and
purple
Great rhododendrons open their lordly flowers,
While among them, yellow or pink or ivory-white,
Feminine azaleas delicately unfold.
But soon these glories are all withered and fallen,
And once more it is a loneliness of green leaves
Embowering cool repose in its cool shades.
Slowly the summer passes; over the hazels
Sweet honeysuckles ramble; the nuts ripen;
Birch-leaves change to amber, the ferns to gold.
But days shorten; stern winter is coming:
With wind and rain sweeping the oaks, it lays
Their branching grandeur bare against the sky.
Lovelier in its severity then seems
Their naked beauty than all their green pride.
Why then, with such bountiful companionship
Ever at hand to enchant or to console,
Do I not stay content, but week by week
With a heart restless and thankless, must be still
Fleeing from a known happiness to towns
And people whose souls I know not, nor they
mine?
Alas, being not a tree, but a mere man,
What is better I see and praise, what is worse I
follow.

ANDERSON M. SCRUGGS

GLORY TO THEM

GLORY to them, the toilers of the earth
Who wrought with knotted hands in wood
and stone
Dreams their unlettered minds could not give birth
And symmetries their souls had never known.
Glory to them, the artisans, who spread
Cathedrals like brown lace before the sun,
Who could not build a rhyme, but reared instead
The Doric grandeur of the Parthenon!

I never cross a marble portico,
Or lift my eyes where stained glass windows
steal
From virgin sunlight moods of deeper glow,
Or walk dream-peopled streets, except to feel
A hush of reverence for that vast dead
Who gave us beauty for a crust of bread.



A. E. COPPARD

A LOVER

WHEN I loved truly
I was a boy;
To worship unduly
Was my great joy.

When I loved wisely
I loved not well,
For love and wisdom
Move separable.

Calypso dissembles,
Psyche forswears,
And loth is Phryne
For lover's cares.

But true to it, compass
The planet turns,
Forgetting, forsaken—
And still it burns.

Now time has triumphed
And my loves are gone,
I keep my vision
Of every one;

Though even the fairest,
Most sweet of the fair,
Seems but a ghost
With a piteous air.

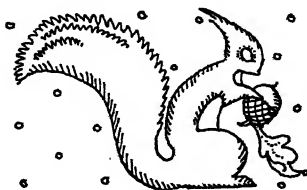
EDWIN SEAVER

NOT YET A WORD

NOT yet a word, not yet a word, a whisper
heard among the crisp dead leaves a tree
still clung to, or impact of feathered flake
on lake, snow filtering through quiet.

Already the idea stirs in the loam, the seeds
turn in their dawnsleep hearing or dreaming they
hear
down dark unfolding corridors the first
song seeking the first bird's throat.

Under the loosened girdle of silence the curled
buds quiver, the lean sap mounting the eager limbs
gives ears to the muffled pulse-beat in the womb:
the whirr of dynamos, the rush of wings.



PATRICK KAVANAGH

PLOUGHMAN

I TURN the lea-green down
Gaily now,
And paint the meadow brown
With my plough.

I dream with silvery gull
And brazen crow.
A thing that is beautiful
I may know.

Tranquillity walks with me
And no care.
O, the quiet ecstasy
Like a prayer.

I find a star-lovely art
In a sod.
Joy that is timeless! O heart
That knows God!

LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

WITH A FLOWER

THE width of a town,
The height of a tower,
Went into the blue
Of this roadside flower.

Travail and ache,
Ache, travail again,
Brought hither this spark
To a trivial lane.

Oh, petalling dust!
Oh, gentle and blue!
In the cool of the evening,
I pluck it for you.



STELLA GIBBONS

THE TWO WISHES

WHEN I am walking through the wind,
Its soft song flying past my ears,
The regal earth doth fall away
And life a dwindling dream appears:
Once there was misery; once, delight;
The moon had her mists and the sun his spears,
And the earth had spells mine eyes to bind . . .
But all these fade in the wind's flight.
Blow louder, wind, in full waves blow,
I would walk for always so.

But when rich music silences
All sound, but its own wandering power,
And the listening faces dream, the while
My saddening memories break in flower—
And when I meet your stranger's eyes
Across those faces like a sea,
I wish them heavy seas indeed
That their harsh waves might cover me.
Roll coldly, waves; waters, spin down
My memories where all memories drown.



RICHARD ALDINGTON

INSCRIPTIONS

THINK well of me, but not too well.
I would not seem to fail you
As I must
If you esteem me overmuch;
But love me more than well.
For too much love
Was never known beneath the sun.
And only your great love
Can soothe that shame
Of knowing me unworthy of your love.

Through you I have inherited a world—
Myself.
And another mysterious and enchanted world.
So mysterious and lovely and beckoning
In the dew and the pure gold dawn.
I tremble, standing in silence
On the verge of these worlds.

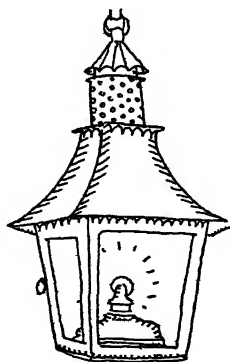
I loved thee once, Atthis—
But no.
Pale beautiful face,
Cool silver moonlight of love,
Through you I learned
To seek for the noonday
And its golden ecstasies.

Lips that never lost their sweetness
Nor formed a bitter line.
Delicate frail face and forehead.
Eyes of pain.

Eyes of a sweet hurt child.
Eyes that touch me to the heart—
Oh that for long and long
I might feel your presence,
Eyes with a dawn in them.

I had thought of immortality
With indifference and cool scepticism.
Until I gazed long
Into your soft shining eyes
As you loved me.

It seemed that the dawns were more exquisite.
The world more mysterious, purer.
The sea and sky more tenderly light-flushed
When we awoke together.



MARY BRENT WHITESIDE

POPLARS

THEY are the hillside monarchs, these
Lombardy poplar trees.
Above the lower reaches of the shade,
They wear their coronals of light—
Cool silver in the fiercest noon—
And in the audience chamber of the night,
Where courtier aspens go arrayed
In all the velvet darkness of the glade,
They only wear the fillet of the moon.

They are the guardians of the street,
Standing, from head to feet
In armour burnished by the wind that strays
In higher ethers and leaves free
The branches of a wider girth
On every motionless and lovelier tree.
While sheltering from the treacherous ways
They give their hearts to thrushes, that shall praise
A lyric throne above the listening earth.

So being royal, shall they bear
The fury of the air—
These, that for guests, had little singing things,
When armies of the winds assail
And all the batteries of the sky
Release the shattering charges of the hail.
For these that touched the lyric wings
Of life have yet the dauntless hearts of kings
And show at need how wounded
monarchs—die.

JOHN HALL WHEELLOCK

PRAYER TO THE SUN

MY Father,
Here for a moment in your light I stand,
And feel upon my lifted face
Your touch, your touch, as of a father's hand.
Shine down upon me. See,
It is so little and so brief a thing
That drinks your light, remembering
The dark that was, the dark that is to be—
So soon to be again.
O let your glance fall tenderly and mild!
Have pity now, and when
The night has taken me have pity then,
Father, on me, your child.



ARTHUR L. SALMON

IN LATER DAYS

WHEN we have passed the gate
Beyond the midway fields of life, and tread
With lurking dread
To the unfamiliar destinies that await,
Shall we not find
That many things we feared to leave behind
Remain with kindly and consoling grace
To make a homeland of the loneliest place?
Our eyes will dim to meet the same dear flowers —
The same old cuckoo-song of April hours
Calling from misty bowers;
The selfsame lark-song hailing from the blue
That childhood summers knew.

And then all silences will be a song;
And then the old loved places will be dearer,
The lost loved faces nearer;
And we shall pass
Through fields of daisied grass,
Redeemed from much complexity of wrong,
From mad revolt and passioned fight,
To patient days and dreams beyond the night.

CHARLES NORMAN

DEATH'S DOLLS ARE WE

DEATH'S dolls are we,
his marionettes,
he lets us see
the sun, and lets
high starry winds
blow over us
to thrill our minds;
then, covetous
of his tall dolls
he can condemn
to air their souls
and gather them
many at once
and one by one,
dreamer and dunce
and king's son,
until they lie
with ample room
in a bed high
and wide with gloom
where he can lull
in his dark keep
his beautiful
tall dolls asleep
and but the globe
can rock this bed
and be a robe
to all the dead.

D. H. LAWRENCE

THE TRIUMPH OF THE MACHINE

THEY talk of the triumph of the machine,
but the machine will never triumph.

Out of the thousands and thousands of centuries of
man
the unrolling of ferns, while tongues of acanthus
lapping at the sun
for one sad century
machines have triumphed, rolled us hither and
thither,
hardened the earth, shaking the lark's nest till the
eggs have broken.

Shaken the marshes, till the geese have gone
and the wild swans flown away, singing the swan-
song of us.

Hard, hard on the earth the machines are rolling,
but through some hearts they will never roll.

Ah no, in the hearts of some men there still is
sanctuary
where the lark nests safely.

The lark nests in his heart,
and through the reeds of his marshy loins
swims the mallard duck at dawn, in that quick joy;
deer crash their horns in the mountains of his
breast,
there are foxes in the cover of his beard.

Ah no, the machine will never triumph;
in some hearts still the sanctuaries of wild life
are quite untouched.

And at last
all the creatures that cannot die while one heart
harbours them
they will hear a silence fall
as the machines fail and finish;
they will hear the faint rending of the asphalt road
as the hornbeam pushes up his sprouts;
they will hear far, far away the last factory hoot
send up the last wild cry of despair
as the machine breaks finally down.

And then at last
all the creatures that were driven back into the
uttermoſt corners of the ſoul
they will peep forth.



LOUIS GOLDING

TOO MUCH BEAUTY, WORLD

(*For Francis Brett Young*)

TOO much beauty, world! How can frail eyes
Endure the lances of the sinking sun;
Nor the no less poignant barbs of those
Swift stars whose fluent poison sears the bone?

Miserable ears, whose drums the gong of wind
Assaults, and when this fails, then birds fail not
To fray that threadbare texture with such sound
As saps firm oak-trees even, at the root.

Do not too rashly open the fern-fronds
By mossy wells nor bracken on high heaths.
I have known hair so cool that my scorched hands
Fluttered down its flame like silly moths.

Too much beauty, world! Have ruth on us,
Bound on the fierce gyration of thy wheel!
We are no more than the bleak shell of a house
Rocked by the winds until the last stone fall.

Naught then but Death to wait for. His strong mail
Holds us immune from Beauty at the last.
Yet not too surely. Though sealed from the sun's
toil
What of the stirrings in the germinal dust?

Who knows relentless Beauty hath surcease
—Woe's us, sad creatures!—even in Death's
demesnes?

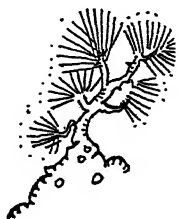
Where are her shafts not potent? Who can guess
Her wild confusions in our obscure bones?

MARGARET EMERSON BAILEY

CLOSE TO THE EARTH

LET the brown lark fly
That has wings to fly.
The ant, the beetle,
The mole, and I
Keep close to the earth
Where we like to lie.

For close to the earth a beetle may trundle
Its treasure below in a claw-clipped bundle;
And close to the earth an ant may funnel
Earthwork in turrets the length of its tunnel;
And close to the earth the secret mole
May fit to its body its cool, dark hole;
And I, who have never a wish to climb
The sky with a lilt or a whistling rhyme,
May stoop and listen and mark the time
Of surer songs than a bird ever sings—
Sings slow with the pulse at the root of things.



MARY STELLA EDWARDS

VANISHED

SOFTLY tread where the tree invites you,
Daughter of men:
This is a time whose beauty may not
Come again.
Point your toe to the grass and whisper,
'Dance with me!
I am in love with the silver dreaming
Soul of a tree.'

The tree is awake and bends enticing,
Laughing low;
All the blades of the grass are sighing
A tale they know.
Feet in the dew with dark prints dapple
Its silver bloom;
Her dark, deep eyes are wells reflecting—
She knows not whom!

Floats a leaf, and the last of summer
Shivering stands;
Where are the fingers that once so lightly
Touched her hands?
The grass sighs still and the tree is laughing
Now as then;
But the time that stole her beauty will not
Come again.

GERALD GOULD

OBLIGATO

YOUR curved lips are remembrancers of sorrow:
When did I love them last,
Or give them leave to load my poor to-morrow
With mortgage of the past?

There were children disappointed, and you heard
them
Crying in the summer night.
There were maids who pitied life, but death
preferred them,
And time put out their light.

And now, when you listen to music, that sorrow
lingers.
As the wind moves the ships,
It shakes your heart to a storm. It stills your
fingers,
It carves the curve of your lips.

I do not know the meaning of your riddle,
Nor when our grief was new;
But here we sit, you listening to the fiddle,
And I looking at you.

BERNICE KENYON

QUIET

OUT of confusion, out of conflicting voices,
My song was woven. Forever in my head
The wild sounds were drawn together, and twisted
Into a moving music, a secret luminous thread
Which the mind followed, wanting a far ending—
Wanting a joy, like silence. Now the bright
strength
Of the song is done; I am done with all confusion;
The thread is spun to its length.

Because all worldly voices are remote and quiet
Since my ears at last are attuned to your repose,
Because you are near, I am happy to be done with
singing;
I can sit languidly, and contemplate the rose
Bending upon its stem in the red of evening,
Unmoved by the twilight waning, by dusk in the
air.
And the turmoil of the world, far and beyond
knowing,
It is not for me now. I am silent. I am unaware.

EDMUND BLUNDEN

THE SURVIVAL

TO-DAY'S house makes to-morrow's road;
I knew these heaps of stone
When they were walls of grace and might,
The country's honour, art's delight,
That over fountained silence showed
Fame's final bastion.

Inheritance has found fresh work,
Disunion union breeds;
Beauty the strong, its difference lost,
Has matter fit for flood and frost.
Here's the true blood that will not shirk
Life's new-commanding needs.

With curious costly zeal, O man,
Raise orrery and ode;
How shines your tower, the only one
Of that especial site and stone!
Grieve not if dream's confusion can
Sustain to-morrow's road.



